

PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

QUARTERLY REPORT: JANUARY 1, 2008 – MARCH 31, 2008

The Planning & Zoning Commission met its typical three regularly-scheduled times each month, and in addition, had a February 11th joint meeting with Board of Selectmen and Environmental Protection Commission and Board of Finance regarding the presentation of the draft Flood Mitigation Strategy.

Actions by type this quarter:

Site Plans: 2 approved; 2 amendments approved
Coastal Site Plan Review: 3 granted; 1 withdrawn, 1 amendment approved
Flood Damage Prevention: 5 granted, 1 withdrawn
Land Filling/Excavation: 6 approved
Special Permit: 4 granted, 1 withdrawn
Amendments to the Zoning Regulations: 1 withdrawn

Total Number of Projects*: 20 applications, 3 amendments and 2 referral reports issued.

*Total number of projects does not equal number of actions, because some applications include multiple permits.

In April, the Commission will vote upon various pending applications, including: Weed Beach Master Plan implementation; lights in Tilley Park; improvements at St. Luke's Church; a proposed four lot subdivision off Boston Post Road; and a DRI proposal for a zoning regulation amendment and Town Plan amendment regarding financial service uses in downtown.

Staff has worked with a subcommittee of the Planning and Zoning Commission along with members of DAHAC on creating a draft inclusionary housing regulation. This will possibly be put forth by the Planning and Zoning Commission for a public hearing sometime next quarter.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) met six times this quarter—twice in January, once in February and three times in March (March 10, 19 and 26). A total of 24 applications were acted upon: Fourteen were granted; one was granted in part denied in part; six were denied; one withdrawn; and two other decisions were made. Ten of the decisions were made in January, five in February, and nine in March. The ZBA has scheduled extra April meetings to address their existing workload.

The Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) met four times this quarter—on January 9, February 6, March 5, and March 19. At those meetings, nine applications were granted, one withdrawn, and one amendment granted. On March 19th, the EPC held a public hearing on the draft "Environmental Protection Commission Flood and Erosion Regulations". The Commission will be making a decision on whether to adopt those Regulations at either their April or May meeting. Staff is working on an update to the EPC application form, and once complete, it will be placed on the Town web site. That is expected to be accomplished by the end of next quarter. In February, a new Town Inland Wetland and Watercourses Map was adopted. It is now on the Town web site and available for purchase by the general public.

The Architectural Review Board met three times---once each month this period. The projects reviewed and acted upon include: new signage for the building at 1020 Boston Post Road, the new buildings at Weed Beach, downtown and interchange directional signage, and a new building at the intersection of Noroton Avenue and Heights Road.

The number of Zoning Permits is down compared to the same quarter last year. This is attributable to seasonal fluctuation and the weather, but possibly also partially due to the national economy. There were 110 Zoning Permits acted upon this quarter--32 Permits in January; 36 Zoning Permits in February, and 42 in March. Of those permits six were for new residences (five “teardowns” and one new house on a vacant lot), six for pools and spas, and four for signs.

A substantial amount of staff time this quarter was spent preparing the return of record for one of the Whole Foods Market appeals. That work has been given to Town Counsel. The FEMA Grants were submitted on January 8th and the TOD Grants were formally submitted to SWRPA on February 14, 2008. Staff has been attending meetings of the DRI Design subcommittee and the economic restructuring subcommittee of DRI. Staff is now working on the DRI – Design Guidelines on the following sections: “Planning and Application Process” and “Parking”.

Four Department staff members have been working with Bob Steeger, Darien Oustafine and engineers from Tighe & Bond on a stormwater regulation report. It is expected that the Planning and Zoning Commission will receive a draft report sometime in May.

Our summer intern, Alison Ko, worked for us one week in January to assist us while she was on her winter break from Cornell University.